



THE ARC, AAIDD, AUCD,
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FACT SHEET

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Background

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148) and the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act (H.R. 4872) will provide access to affordable health insurance for 32 million Americans who are currently uninsured. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, P.L. 111-148 and the Reconciliation bill will reduce the federal deficit by \$130 billion over the first ten years and \$1.2 trillion over the second ten years. The law represents a sea change in expanding access to affordable, quality health care for persons with disabilities.

Insurance Market Reforms - the law will:

- Prohibit pre-existing condition exclusions, lifetime and annual caps, discrimination based on disability and health status, and rescission of coverage;
- Require guaranteed issue and renewal of insurance policies.

Expanding Access to Coverage

- Establish a temporary high risk pool to provide coverage to those who are currently uninsured. This high risk pool will expire when the new Insurance Market Exchange becomes effective on 1/1/14.
- Provide significant subsidies to assist low income individuals to purchase coverage in the Exchange;
- Include coverage of dental and vision care for children in the Exchange;
- Include coverage of critical disability-related services, such as mental health services, rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices, in the Exchange.

Medicaid

- Expands Medicaid eligibility to 133 per cent of the federal poverty level with significant federal funding;
- Increases Medicaid reimbursement for physicians and pediatricians to Medicare rates in 2013 and 2014 with full federal funding.

Medicare

- Improves care coordination for dual eligibles (those who receive both Medicare and Medicaid benefits) by creating a new “Federal Coordinated Health Care Office” within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS);

Data Collection and Disparities for Persons with Disabilities

- Requires the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to:
 - Locate where persons with disabilities access primary, acute, and long-term care;
 - Determine the number of providers with accessible facilities and equipment to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities;
 - Determine the number of Employees of health care providers trained in disability awareness and patient care of individuals with disabilities.

The Secretary of HHS, through the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology will analyze the data for trends in health disparities and make reports available.

- Require any federally conducted or supported health care or public health program, activity or survey to collect and report to the extent practicable data on disability status, including disability subgroups (using oversampling if needed).

Prevention

Identifies meeting the needs of persons with disabilities as a specific activity of the “Community Transformation Grants”, a new competitive grant program where communities will be awarded grants to promote individual and community wellness and reduce the incidence of chronic diseases associated with overweight people who are obese, or use tobacco.

Provider Training

Increases opportunities for training of health care providers, including dentists, on the needs of persons with disabilities, including those with developmental disabilities.

Action Taken by Congress and the Administration

Throughout the past year, enactment of comprehensive health care reform has been high on the Congressional agenda and was completed within the last month. The **Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act** (P.L. 111-148) was signed into law by President Obama on March 23 and the **Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010** (H.R. 4872) on March 30.

Recommendations

Members of Congress should work with the Administration to ensure proper implementation of the new health reform laws. Congress should exercise its oversight authority to ensure that the new health reform laws operate as intended for people with disabilities.

For more information, please contact The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy Disability Policy Collaboration (202) 783-2229, Association of University Centers on Disability (301) 588-8252, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (202) 387-1968, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (202) 506-5813 or the Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (802) 760-8856.